

Record of Achievements in  
North and South Vietnam  
9 Sep 67

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No Date	Blind Memo re <u>Achievements and Effects of the War</u> <u>in Vietnam</u>

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9 September 1967

MEMORANDUM

A RECORD OF ACHIEVEMENTS IN VIETNAM

I. South Vietnam

A. Achievements in the Military Sector

1. Allied forces have reversed the military situation since 1965 and smashed Communist hopes of a military victory.
2. Large-scale Communist military operations have failed repeatedly.
3. US air and ground actions have seriously damaged Communist forces and base areas.
4. Communist losses in men and materiel have increased several times over.
5. The air war has made the movement of men and supplies to the South difficult and costly.
6. Allied sweep operations are gradually reopening the countryside.
7. The Communist structure in the South has come under serious strain.
8. Enemy tax revenues reflect a decline in Viet Cong political control and popular support.
9. The Communists have been forced to modify their military tactics.
10. South Vietnamese military and security forces have been improved.

MORI #95461 RIFPUB, MDR NLJ  
94-462

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Approved For Release 2007/03/07 : CIA-RDP78T02095R000600450001-4

Military Situation. Since mid-1965 the military situation in South Vietnam has been reversed. US and allied forces have gained the initiative and have crushed any Communist hope of early military victory.

Communist Operations. Communist attempts to mount large-scale military operations have failed repeatedly. Their forces are no longer able to move about in strength undetected. Constant and wide-ranging allied spoiling operations have kept the enemy on the run and caused him severe setbacks when engaged. The number of enemy attacks in regimental and multibattalion strength has dropped. Over the past year, the level of Viet Cong guerrilla harassment, terrorism and sabotage has also shown some decline.

US Air Attacks. Tactical and strategic air attacks in the South have seriously damaged Communist forces and base areas. Almost 400,000 attack sorties have been flown by allied air forces in the South. In 1967 almost 600 attack sorties have been flown daily. About 80 percent of all attack sorties have supplied close or direct air support to ground forces. During the last 18 months pilots have reported over 22,000 Communist casualties from air strikes, almost one-fourth as many as the killed-in-action figure compiled from body count. Captured enemy soldiers report B-52 attacks to be one of the most awesome and demoralizing aspects of the war.

Allied Operations. Major allied ground operations have also penetrated and broken up some of the enemy's important base areas and jungle strongholds. Operations BIRMINGHAM, ATTLEBORO AND JUNCTION CITY, for example, seriously disrupted the activities of the highest Communist political and military headquarters in the South, the Central Office for South Vietnam, located in "War Zone C" northwest of Saigon.

Enemy Losses. Communist losses in men and materiel have increased several times over. Since the beginning of 1965, the number of enemy killed in action, by body count, totals about 145,000 or nearly triple the total for the previous three years. Enemy personnel killed in the first seven months of 1967 number about 54,000 or almost as many as in all of 1966. The number of enemy weapons captured

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shows a parallel trend, totalling about 41,800 from January 1965 through July 1967. The number of enemy defectors, or Chieu Hoi ralliers, has about doubled each year for a total of 55,000 since January 1965. Ralliers in the first eight months of 1967 already exceed last year's total. Enemy food caches captured or destroyed by allied ground forces between March 1966 and April 1967--at a rate of about 75 tons per day--are conservatively estimated to total about one-half of the full year's in-country requirements for all Communist regular units in the South.

Logistic Disruption. Military actions in South Vietnam have also disrupted the enemy's logistics system. There are increasing reports of food and ammunition shortages and of inability to move supplies freely throughout the country. Increased enemy dependence on external sources makes resupply more uncertain and unreliable.

Secured Areas. Allied sweep operations gradually are beginning to pay off in terms of reopening the countryside. Along the central coast, the major north-south highway--Route 1--and some lateral roads are generally open to commercial traffic. Due north of Saigon, Route 13, although still subject to interdiction, has been opened to permit a flow of goods to and from previously isolated rubber producing areas.

Weakening of Enemy Structure. The Communist military and political force structure in the South has come under serious strain, especially at its lower levels. Evidence from prisoners, defectors, agents, and captured documents indicates that Communist problems in the South are growing, especially with respect to morale, supply, manpower, and loss of popular support. One document admitted the loss of 1,000,000 persons from Communist control during 1966. Most of the 1967 infiltrators from the North picked up so far say they were sent South to replace losses in existing units rather than to form new ones.

Tax Losses. Declining enemy tax revenues also reflect the decline in Viet Cong political control and popular support. They have been forced to impose higher tax rates as expenditures increased at the same time that their tax base in the South narrowed. This in turn has made collection more difficult and caused the VC in some areas to resort to increased terrorism and intimidation.

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Change in Tactics. These adverse trends have forced the Communists to reassess their conviction of mid-1965 that they could counter the introduction of US ground forces by continuing to develop their own main force structure and by continuing large-scale offensive action. It was evident by 1966 that the Communists had been forced to modify their tactics. They began to avoid head-on confrontations with large US forces and to place increased emphasis on guerrilla warfare and small-unit actions as a means of off-setting superior US mobility and firepower.

Continued Enemy Defeats. Despite these shifts in tactics, Communist strength and influence in many areas of South Vietnam continue to be eroded. In Binh Dinh Province, for example, gains have been made against Communist main force units and against the local Viet Cong infrastructure. In adjacent provinces to the south, continuous sweeps conducted largely by South Korean forces have created critical supply problems for North Vietnamese army troops in the area and reduced their offensive capability.

South Vietnamese Forces. South Vietnamese military and security forces have also registered improvements. With a greater force structure, better equipment, training, and promotion and pay systems, their morale has been boosted and desertions have dropped off sharply. They have performed well against regular North Vietnamese units in the far north and are still carrying the major burden against Viet Cong forces in the delta.

#### B. Achievements in Pacification

1. Some gains have been made in nearly every area of Revolutionary Development.
2. In 1966 444 new hamlets were secured, and a considerably larger number will come under government control this year.
3. The trend for the past two years has been toward increasing government control of the rural population.

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Development Gains. Under the present Revolutionary Development program, some gains have been registered in nearly every aspect of pacification or nation building during the past year. The South Vietnamese government has firmly committed itself to the program and is enlarging its own efforts. South Vietnamese military troops have been given the mission of providing direct military support to the Revolutionary Development effort. At present, 57 South Vietnamese army battalions are assigned to this support mission. The paramilitary Regional Forces and Popular Forces at the provincial and local levels are being reorganized to assume the basic defensive mission for pacification.

RD Teams. There are 571 Revolutionary Development teams at work in South Vietnam. The number is expected to increase to about 615 by 1968. The work of these teams represents the first effective effort by the Vietnamese government to counter Communist influence at the village and hamlet levels. Even their modest successes to date are viewed by the Communists as a threat and the program has become a priority target. From 1 January 1967 through 31 July, 667 Communist incidents were directed against Revolutionary Development teams.

Hamlets Secured. In 1966, 444 hamlets were secured under the Revolutionary Development program, and more than 1,000 are receiving some degree of development under the program this year. As of 1 July 1967, South Vietnam listed 4,723 of the approximately 12,000 in the country as secured, an increase of more than 300 this year.

Population Control. The gradual securing of new hamlets, the movement of rural inhabitants to the cities and the flow of refugees from Communist-controlled areas have brought an upward trend over the past two years in the number of persons under government control. Out of an estimated total population of 16,500,000 in 1967, some 10,800,000 persons (including urban residents) are now listed as living in areas controlled by the government or in which the government has significantly extended its influence.

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### C. Achievements in the Political Sector

1. The political situation has been generally stable for the past two years.
2. Religious and regional factionalism has subsided.
3. There has been a generally smooth transition toward more representative government.
4. Long-needed political and social reforms are under way.

Political Stability. The political situation in South Vietnam has been generally stable for the past two years. No military coups have been attempted. South Vietnam's ruling generals have been able to maintain an impressive degree of military unity and to govern relatively effectively.

Decrease in Factionalism. Frictions among religious, regional and political factions have subsided. The influence of the militant Buddhists has been weakened, and politico-religious sects in the delta have strengthened their allegiance to Saigon. The government's relations with labor unions have improved over the past year. Negotiations for the return to the government of dissident ethnic minority troops in the highlands have been conducted, and a special statute for minority peoples has been promulgated.

Representative Government. South Vietnam has carried out a generally smooth transition toward more representative government. A new constitution was drafted by an elected constituent assembly and promulgated. Elections for a president and vice president and for the upper house of the legislature have been held with a voter turnout of almost 4,900,000 persons or 83.1 percent of the registered electorate. Elections have also been held at the local levels. Provincial and municipal councils have been elected for the 44 provinces and six autonomous cities. Some 984 villages have elected administrative councils and 4,476 hamlets have selected hamlet chiefs.

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Reforms. The South Vietnamese government has made a start in the initiation of long-needed reforms. Some high-level officials have been removed for corruption, and a widespread clean-up has begun within the army. The judicial system has been under revision at its lowest levels. Penalties for economic crimes have been tightened. Press censorship has been lifted. More open political party activity is to be encouraged under the new constitution.

#### D. Achievements in the Economic Sector

1. Disruptive pressures common to a war economy have been kept under control.
2. Solid progress has been made in building an economic base for postwar reconstruction.
3. The Viet Cong are suffering from serious food shortages.

Economic Pressures. Signs of economic progress are apparent despite the heavy burden imposed by the war. Price increases are being held down to manageable proportions and inflationary pressures are much less serious than in Korea during the Korean War. Domestic tax revenues in 1966 were 67 percent higher than in 1965 and in the first quarter of 1967 were running almost 50 percent ahead of the corresponding period of 1966. Despite constant pressure for wage increases, the economy has not been crippled by serious strikes. Rice farmers in South Vietnam are now receiving a higher return for their product than they did in 1966, and there is evidence, especially in pacified areas, that farmers are able to buy increasing amounts of such consumer goods as bicycles and sewing machines.

Industrial Base. Despite heavy fighting in northern areas work is continuing on the industrial complex at An Hoa which will generate electric power and produce fertilizers and chemicals. The huge port complex at Cam Ranh Bay will provide an impetus for future economic development in central Vietnam.

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Communist Food Problems. Food shortages have become a serious problem for the Communists, particularly in the northern and highland areas. Even in some delta areas reports indicate that the Viet Cong are hard pressed to collect food. Considerable military manpower has been diverted to agricultural production and to the collection of food from the peasants.

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## II. North Vietnam

### A. Summary of Achievements in the Military Sector

1. US airstrikes have seriously disrupted normal military activity.
2. Nearly 700 major bridges and some 50 railroad yards have been heavily damaged.
3. The North Vietnamese air force has been virtually neutralized.
4. The air war has deprived North Vietnam of strategic mobility.
5. Hanoi has been forced to impose unpopular civilian control measures.

Airstrikes. Attacks against North Vietnamese military targets have greatly disrupted normal military activities and completely neutralized many facilities. Over 75 percent of North Vietnam's ammunition depots have been destroyed. More than 25 percent of all military barracks have been destroyed and most of the remaining have been abandoned.

Rail and Road Damage. Over 660 significant highway and railroad bridges and at least 50 major railroad yards have been seriously damaged. Transshipment areas and supply areas also have been heavily damaged. Nearly 4,000 trucks and some 2,000 railroad cars have been destroyed and an equal number damaged. Concentrated attacks against northern railroad lines, especially since late June, have seriously disrupted the movement of essential military traffic from the China border to Hanoi and from the port of Haiphong to Hanoi.

Air Force. The North Vietnamese air force has been virtually neutralized. Some 85 MIG aircraft have been lost since the start of the bombing. Most of the remaining aircraft have been forced to take refuge in Communist China. Over 630 attacks have been made against SAM installations. Radar sites and ammunition storage areas have been the target of many other attacks.

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Strategic Mobility. The air war has deprived Hanoi of considerable strategic mobility because it must assign large numbers of troops to defense of the country. This, in conjunction with the effects of the ground war in the South, deprives Hanoi of any hope of a military victory.

Civilian Hardships. The air war against North Vietnam has brought home to both the Hanoi regime and its people that they are directly and personally involved and exposed to the risks of war. Hanoi has been forced to impose unpopular measures to restrict the civilian population under wartime conditions. The evacuation of both essential and non-essential persons from larger urban areas has reduced productivity, impaired public morale, and created the problem of housing and feeding tens of thousands of displaced persons. Much of the government has been forced to disperse outside of Hanoi. The low level of civilian casualties is a reminder to the population that US attacks are directed against the Hanoi regime and not against the people and that the US retains the power to escalate the war at will.

#### B. Achievements in the Economic Sector

1. North Vietnam's economy has suffered losses on the order of hundreds of million dollars.
2. Large-scale industry is at a standstill.
3. The air war has caused a severe drain on the labor force.
4. Food production has declined and consumer goods are scarce.
5. North Vietnam has become almost completely dependent on aid from the Communist world.

Impact of Airstrikes. Over 300,000 sorties flown against North Vietnam have inflicted almost one-third of a billion dollars of damage to strategic targets. In addition, large--though unmeasurable--indirect losses have been suffered in both industrial and agricultural output.

Effects on Industry. North Vietnam's belligerency has cost it a decade of hard-won economic progress. Large-scale modern industry is at a standstill because of bomb damage, shortages of electric power, and lack of raw materials. North Vietnam's showplace industry, the Thai Nguyen Steel Plant, has ceased production. The cement plant in Haiphong, a major war-supporting facility, has been heavily damaged and is not operating. About 80 percent of the central electric generating capacity is out of operation with no likelihood that the damaged powerplants can be restored for many months and even years. Fertilizer, chemical, paper and textile production has ceased or has been greatly curtailed. Air attacks have destroyed more than 85 percent of North Vietnam's bulk petroleum storage capacity.

Labor Force. The air war has forced Hanoi to divert 500,000 to 700,000 persons, principally civilians, to full- and part-time work repairing lines of communication and coping with the effects of air attack. The manpower drain has degraded North Vietnam's war-supporting output, agricultural output, and even the output of some daily necessities. The need for experienced managerial cadres in the North conflicts with the pressing need for aggressive cadres to lead the war in the South.

Consumer Production. Food production declined in 1966 and in 1967, in part because of the bombing. Large imports of food are required and an increasing proportion of less palatable foods now substitute for rice. Many consumer goods are scarce and the price is often beyond the reach of the average consumer.

Trade. North Vietnam's annual trade deficit, which averaged about \$35 million during 1962-64, increased to \$158 million in 1966. Most of its holdings in hard currencies have been lost. The North Vietnamese have become almost completely dependent for their existence on economic and military aid from other Communist countries.